

The Essex Tawny Owl Survey Recording Guide

Thank you for showing an interest in helping to record the Tawny Owls of Essex. This recording guide is provided so that you not only record the information we require, it also here to ensure that the information is collected in a safe manner. Most records can be collected quite easily, by listening for birds calling in your neighbourhood. Others will be collected on birdwatching trips. However, you may wish to go out at night to listen for owls. We strongly recommend that you do not go into woods, and other isolated or quiet areas on your own. If you do decide to visit such places, we strongly recommend you go with someone else, and that you wear suitable clothing for the time of the year. Essential items to carry with you are a good torch, and that the batteries are good. A mobile 'phone is also essential, but make sure the battery is charged and that the cost of your calls will be met. It is important that you tell someone where you are going, and your anticipated return time.

Habitat codes

Apart from finding where the Tawny Owls of Essex are, we also want to try and establish what habitats they are living in. We know that they live in woodlands, but where else do they live?

We do not want to make this survey complicated, so we have compiled a simple list of habitats that Tawny Owls will use

CW	Coniferous woodland
BW	Broad-leaved deciduous woodland
MW	Mixed woodland
V	Village
T	Town
LT	Large town, including Chelmsford City
F	Farmland
P	Parkland

We also want to try and find out a little of the relations between Tawny Owls and other species. Please include the codes of all known species.

FW	Fallow deer
R	Roe
MJ	Muntjac
RD	Red deer
NK	There are deer, but I am unsure of the species
NN	No known deer in the area.
BO	There are Barn Owls in the area
LO	Little Owls are frequent in the area
K	Kestrels are frequent in the area
S	Sparrowhawks are frequent in the area.

Nesting records: We do not recommend looking for Tawny Owl nests especially during the months of January until July. If you do happen to find a nest, please use the following codes.

H	Hole in tree. If possible please identify the tree species
CN	Old crows nest or other open nest
NB	Nest box
OG	On ground
O	Other